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NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 /108 W  
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P 292104Z SEP 80  
FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6939  
INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION  
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA  
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS  
USMISSION GENEVA  
AMEMBASSY LA PAZ  
AMEMBASSY LIMA  
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO  
AMEMBASSY ROME  
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO  
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK  
USCINCSO QUARRY HTS

ARGENTINA PROJECT (S200000044)

U.S. DEPT. OF STATE, A/RPS/IPS

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EO 12065: GDS 9/26/86 (RUSER, CLAUS W.) OR-M  
TAGS: SHUM AR  
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS SUMMARY: SEPTEMBER 20-26, 1980

REF: BUENOS AIRES 7589

1. [REDACTED] DETENTIONS AND DISAPPEARANCES: THE FRG EMBASSY HAS TOLD  
JS OF A DETENTION AND A POSSIBLE DISAPPEARANCE LAST AUGUST. ON  
AUGUST 21 SECURITY FORCES DETAINED NORA INEZ HILB, WHO HOLDS  
GERMAN AND ARGENTINE CITIZENSHIP, AND HILB'S COMMON-LAW HUSBAND,  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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DANIEL CABEZAS. HILB'S FAMILY IMMEDIATELY GOT INTO TOUCH WITH  
HER GERMAN EMBASSY WHICH INTERVENED IN BEHALF OF BOTH HILB AND

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CABEZAS. HILB SOON THEREAFTER EMERGED IN CUSTODY. SHE STATES THAT HER CAPTORS HAVE TOLD HER THAT CABEZAS WAS ALSO UNDER ARREST, BUT NEITHER THE FRG EMBASSY NOR ANY MEMBER OF THE FAMILY HAS BEEN ABLE TO SEE HIM OR LOCATE HIM AS OF SEPTEMBER 25.

2. [REDACTED] COMMENT: THE GERMANS TELL US THAT EVERYBODY--THE FAMILY, THE GOA AND HILB--AGREES ON ONE THING IN THIS CASE: HILB AND CABEZAS WERE LIVING IN THE COUNTRY CLANDESTINELY AS MEMBERS OF A MONTONERO AGITATION TEAM. WHEN CAPTURED THEY WERE IN POSSESSION OF ARMS AND A PRINTING MACHINE. PRIOR TO RETURNING TO ARGENTINA EARLIER THIS YEAR, THE TWO HAD BEEN IN MEXICO. THIS CASE BEARS A GREAT SIMILARITY TO THAT OF AIXA EDITH BONA AND MARTIN HERVACIO GUADEX, MONTONEROS WHO WERE ALSO CAPTURED LATE LAST AUGUST (BUENOS AIRES 7249). CABEZAS IS THE SON OF THELMA JARA DE CABEZAS WHO IS ONE OF THE MOST REKNOWNED DISAPPEARANCES BECAUSE OF HER CONNECTION WITH THE MOTHERS OF THE PLAZA DE MAYO.

3. [REDACTED] TIGHTENING THE LIMITS FOR POLITICAL ACTIVITY? IN THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS POLITICIANS HAVE ENJOYED SUBSTANTIALLY EXPANDED OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET AND TO SPEAK OUT ON ISSUES. AS A RESULT, THE PRESS HAS BEEN FILLED WITH CRITICISMS OF GOVERNMENT POLICY AND POLITICAL LEADERS HAVE CRISSCROSSED THE COUNTRY SPEAKING TO THEIR FAITHFUL.

4. [REDACTED] THE WELTER OF SHARP ATTACKS ON THE GOA AND THE RUSH OF ACTIVITY DOES NOT SEEM TO BE AIMED AT HUSTLING THE MILITARY OUT OF POWER. RATHER, THE ACTIVITY AND THE STATEMENTS SEEM TO BE BASED FIRST ON EXPECTATIONS THAT THE [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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MILITARY MAY FULFILL ITS PROMISE TO ISSUE A PARTY LAW THAT WILL ALLOW THE PARTIES TO REORGANIZE AND TO RENEW THEIR LEADERSHIP, WHICH HAS BEEN FROZEN IN PLACE SINCE 1976. THE FACTIONS WITHIN THE RADICAL AND THE PERONIST PARTIES ARE JOCKEYING FOR POSITION FOR THAT INTERNAL SELECTION. SECONDLY, THERE IS A PERCEPTION AMONG POLITICIANS--PERHAPS FOUNDED IN WISH--THAT THE SANDS ARE BEGINNING TO RUN OUT FOR THE MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND THE TIME HAS COME TO BEGIN TO CAMPAIGN FOR POPULAR SUPPORT.

5. [REDACTED] THE GOVERNMENT IS DISCOMFORTED BY SO MUCH POLITICKING. IT HAS NOW SENT SIGNALS TO THE POLITICIANS

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THAT THEY BEST PULL THEMSELVES IN. THE ARREST AND  
EXILING OF A REGIONAL-LEVEL PERONIST LEADER WAS  
BASED ON HIS VIOLATION OF THE LAW SUSPENDING  
POLITICAL ACTIVITY. PERONIST LEADER DEOLINDO BITTEL WAS  
DETAINED BY THE POL8:3 AND QUESTIONED FOR FIVE HOURS  
AFTER HE BLASTED THE GOVERNMENT FOR ALLEGEDLY ARRESTING  
AND TORTURING A MEMBER OF THE PERONIST YOUTH EARLIER  
THIS MONTH. THEN THE GOVERNMENT HAS PUBLICIZED A MEETING  
BETWEEN INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY AND PRESIDENT  
VIDELA IN WHICH THE MINISTER BRIEFED THE PRESIDENT ON  
"THE INCREASING ACTIVITY OF POLITICAL SECTORS...THUS  
VIOLATING THE LAW IN FORCE." FOLLOWING THIS "BRIEFING"  
A PERONIST GATHERING SCHEDULED IN TUCUMAN AND A RADICAL  
"SEMINAR" IN CORDOBA WERE BANNED. OTHER POLITICAL MEET-  
INGS WHICH HAD NOT RECEIVED THE PUBLICITY OF THE BANNED  
GATHERINGS WENT AHEAD, HOWEVER.

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6. [REDACTED] WHILE THE GOVERNMENT MAY WANT THE POLITICIANS TO SLOW DOWN, IT WAS WILLING TO ACCEPT MORE FIREWORKS WHEN IT INVITED FORMER PRESIDENT ARTURO FRONDISI TO PARTICIPATE IN THE "DIALOGUE" WITH INTERIOR MINISTER HARGUINDEGUY. EMERGING FROM THAT MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 23, FRONDISI PREDICTABLY THREW SOME VERY HARD BALLS AT THE MILITARY: PARTICULARLY, HIS STATEMENT THAT THE PERONISTS REPRESENT THE "IMMENSE MAJORITY OF THE WORKING CLASS;" THAT POLITICAL DETAINEES MUST BE FREED; AND THAT THE ECONOMIC PROGRAM IS "INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE EXISTENCE OF 27 MILLION ARGENTINES." FRONDISI

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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SOFTENED THESE BLOWS BY ACKNOWLEDGING THAT THE MILITARY HAD MADE A GREAT CONTRIBUTION IN DEFEATING SUBVERSION AND RECOGNIZED THAT THE ARMED FORCES MUST PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE FUTURE. HE ALSO STATED THAT THERE CURRENTLY IS NO GREAT POPULAR PRESSURE FOR ELECTIONS. FRONDISI, IN KEEPING WITH THE PHILOSOPHY THAT GUIDES THE MID WHICH HE HEADS, SEEMED TO BE SERVING UP TO THE MILITARY AS A SOLUTION TO THE PRESENT SITUATION SOME SORT OF COMBINATION OF MILITARY POPULISM WHICH WOULD LINK THE ARMED FORCES, THE PERONISTS, AND OF COURSE THE MID AS THE ECONOMIC THINKERS OF SUCH A REGIME.

7. (U) DISAPPEARED: THE CHIEF OF POLICE ATTACKS. FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF GENERAL JUAN SASIAIN GAVE A SPEECH SEPTEMBER 19 IN WHICH HE ADDRESSED THE ISSUE OF THE DISAPPEARED AT LENGTH. HE CRITICIZED POLITICIANS, INTELLECTUALS AND LEADERS WHO HAVE CALLED FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND CLARIFICATION OF THE THOUSANDS OF DISAPPEARANCES. HE CHARGED THAT THE PEOPLE WHO CRITICIZE THE GOVERNMENT WERE THE SAME ONES WHO WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR ARGENTINA'S SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC BREAKDOWN IN THE PAST. IN VIEW OF THAT RESPONSIBILITY, HE SAID, THESE CRITICS WOULD DO BETTER TO "MAINTAIN" THE DECORUM OF SILENCE." SASIAIN LAMENTED THAT THOSE WHO SEARCH FOR THE DISAPPEARED MAKE NO SIMILAR EFFORT TO TURN UP THE KILLERS OF MILITARY MEN WHO FELL TO TERRORIST ASSASSINATIONS.

8. (U) TURNING HIS ATTENTION TO HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS, SASIAIN REPORTEDLY IMPLIED THAT MOST OF THEM ARE MANIPULATED BY "MARXISTS" PARTICIPATING IN "DISMAL COALITIONS". HE SAID THAT THESE ORGANIZATIONS PUBLISH

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LISTS OF "PRESUMED SUBVERSIVES WHO HAVE DISAPPEARED."  
HE ADDED "THEY EVEN INDULGE THEMSELVES TO THE POINT OF  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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EXPLOITING MATERNAL SENTIMENT, A CRUEL SENTIMENT LOADED WITH GUILT AND DESPERATION BECAUSE IT DRIVES THOSE WHO NEVER KNEW HOW TO FIND THEIR LOVED ONES WHO THEY LOST BEFORE THEY WERE LOST...THIS SAD BITTERNESS WILL PERHAPS NEVER HAVE AN ANSWER BECAUSE THE DISAPPEARED SHOULD HAVE BEEN SOUGHT OUT BEFORE THEY WERE LOST AND MANY OF THE ORGANIZATIONS THAT NOW SEARCH FOR THEM ARE THE SAME ONES THAT CONFUSED THE PATH FOR THEM."

9. [REDACTED] COMMENT: SASIAIN'S COMMENTS WERE SHRUGGED OFF BY THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS WE TALKED TO AS NO MORE THAN WHAT CAN BE EXPECTED. THE THOUGHT THAT THE MOTHERS OF THE DISAPPEARED ARE AT FAULT FOR THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THEIR CHILDREN IS NOT A NEW ONE AMONG SOME OF THE MILITARY HERE. THIS IDEA IS ROOTED IN THE BELIEF THAT THE TERRORISTS WERE THE PRODUCT OF FLAWED UPRISING. SASIAIN'S COMPLAINT THAT THE MOTHERS ARE BEING MANIPULATED BY POLITICIANS WITH ULTERIOR MOTIVES IS ALSO SOMETHING WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER MILITARY MEN. IT IS POSSIBLE THAT HIS VITRIOLIC REMARKS PRESAGE SOME SORT OF CRACK-DOWN ON HUMAN RIGHTS ACTIVISTS, BUT WE DO NOT THINK SO AND THERE HAVE BEEN NO ACTS SUGGESTING THAT THE GOA IS MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION.

10. (U) HABEAS CORPUS FOR DETAINED. THIRTY-FIVE LAWYERS PRESENTED A COLLECTIVE HABEAS CORPUS PETITION FOR 3,259 PEOPLE DETAINED UNDER PEN WITHOUT TRIAL. THE PETITION CHARGED THAT PRISON CONDITIONS ARE "INHUMAN" AND DEMANDED THAT THE DETAINEES BE ALLOWED TO EXERCISE THE RIGHT OF OPTION.

11. [REDACTED] WE WERE TLD RECENTLY BY A GOA SOURCE THAT OPTIONS WILL BE ANNOUNCED ONLY TWICE A YEAR. THE NEXT ANNOUNCEMENT WILL BE MADE IN THE SPRING, PROBABLY IN NOVEMBER.

12. (U) ANOTHER TRIALS ENDS. THE COURTS CONTINUE TO TRY AND SENTENCE DETAINEES WHO WERE ARRESTED AS TERRORISTS OR SUBVERSIVES  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

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IN THE PAST. TWO PEOPLE WHO WERE ORIGINALLY ARRESTED IN 1974  
AND HELD SINCE THEN WERE GIVEN A SENTENCE OF NINE YEARS BY A JUDGE  
IN CORDOBA.  
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